

Enquiries to: Kevin Symm  
Your Ref:  
Our Ref: FOI/175482



Ms Bridger Warr

Email: [policy@ukhca.co.uk](mailto:policy@ukhca.co.uk)

Date: 12 December 2011

Dear Ms Warr

### **Freedom of Information Request 175482**

Thank you for your recent request received 28 November 2011. Your request was actioned under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in which you requested the following information:

1. Whether the authority has recently undertaken an accurate assessment of the legitimate, current and future costs faced by homecare providers, and whether the authority operates a fee negotiation arrangement that recognises these costs in full.
2. Whether, either: the authority has breached existing clauses in contracts, particularly in relation to inflationary up-lifts; or: where contracts currently provide the authority with a unilateral right to vary or hold contract prices at existing levels, which has been exercised.
3. Whether the authority has engaged in reassessment of homecare packages that have resulted in a general reduction in visit times; or has adopted a per-minute billing system which has reduced providers' income, without a comparable reduction in providers' operating costs
4. Whether the authority's contracting arrangements have added additional costs for providers (for example the introduction of electronic call monitoring) which have not been reflected by an increase in the contract price.
5. Whether service users receiving direct payments can realistically buy regulated care services, if they chose to, that will meet their assessed needs.
6. The council's view on whether contract terms and prices could be found by the courts to have created a reduction in the quality of service provision, which may put citizens who use care services at risk.

Response:

I can confirm that the City Council holds information relevant to the terms of your request.

1. The Authority has recently concluded a competitive tendering process for the provision of home care support. Bidders were required to submit prices and detailed costings with awards being made using MEAT criteria. I am not able to share these rates with you as they are confidential between the Council and its relevant suppliers. We can confirm that the rates were not based on any fee negotiation arrangement.
2. Liverpool City Council's terms and conditions set out in detail the arrangements with


Information Team, Legal Services Municipal Buildings Dale Street  
Liverpool L2 2DH  
Telephone 0151 225 3132 Fax 0151 225 2392  
Email [informationrequests@liverpool.gov.uk](mailto:informationrequests@liverpool.gov.uk)

respect to price, initial term and increases in fees. Any changes to the terms would be made in accordance with the variation procedure set out in the Agreement, but again, the full details of this arrangement are confidential. Presumably organisations who you represent (with whom the Council has a contract) can advise you of these details if they wish.

3. The Authority has not engaged in a reassessment of homecare packages that have resulted in a general reduction in visit times or adopted a per minute billing system.
4. The specification issued to bidders as part of the procurement process, clearly set out the Authority's requirements relating to all aspects of the service to be delivered. Bidders submitted their prices against these requirements.
5. Service users receiving direct payments can buy regulated care services to meet their assessed needs. Indeed, in some cases current service users have opted to use a direct payment to continue to purchase care from their current care provider.
6. As you say in your letter this would be a matter for the courts. The City Council set out clearly during its procurement processes the quality requirements against which bidders were to be evaluated. This evaluation was a rigorous process involving officers, service users and carers. Quality will continue to be monitored throughout the life of the contract.

I trust this information satisfies your enquiry.

Yours sincerely



**Mr Kevin Symm**  
**Senior Information Officer**